

TEXAS APPRAISER LICENSING
AND CERTIFICATION BOARD,
Petitioner,

vs.

BENJAMIN EDWARD HARRIS,
TX-1331585-R,
Respondent.

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DOCKETED COMPLAINT NOS.
16-036 & 16-139

AGREED FINAL ORDER

On the 19 day of August, 2016, the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board (Board) considered the matter of the certification of Benjamin Edward Harris (Respondent).

In order to conclude this matter, Respondent neither admits nor denies the truth of the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law contained herein. Respondent further agrees to the disciplinary action set out in this Agreed Final Order. The Board makes the following findings of fact and conclusions of law and enters this Agreed Final Order in accordance with TEX. OCC. CODE § 1103.458.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent is a Texas state certified residential real estate appraiser who holds certification number TX-1331585-R and was certified by the Board during all times material to the above-noted complaint.
2. Respondent appraised residential real property located at 22119 Cristobal Drive, Garden Ridge, Texas, 78266 (Cristobal Property), on or about August 28, 2015 and another property located at 335 Upper Cibolo Creek Road, Boerne, Texas, 78006 (Cibolo Property) on or about December 30, 2015.
3. Thereafter, complaints (#16-036 & #16-139) were filed with the Board by consumers on or about September 21, 2015 and January 29, 2016, respectively. The Board investigated both complaints to ensure compliance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP), TEX. OCC. CODE CH. 1103 (Act) and 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE CHS. 153 and 155 (Rules).
4. The Board, in accordance with the mandate of the Act and TEX. GOV'T CODE CH. 2001 (APA), notified Respondent of the nature of the accusations involved, on or about October 5, 2015 and February 4, 2016, respectively. Respondent was afforded an opportunity to respond to the accusations in both complaints and was also requested to provide certain documentation to the Board. Thereafter, the Respondent responded with documentation, on or about October 28, 2015 and February 29, 2016, respectively.

5. As a result of the Board's investigations, the Board finds that Respondent violated TEX. OCC. CODE § 1103.405, 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §§ 153.20(a)(6) and 155.1 by the following acts or omissions which did not conform to USPAP in effect at the time of the appraisals of the Cristobal and Cibolo Properties:

- a. USPAP Record Keeping Rule – Respondent failed to maintain a work file containing all documentation necessary to support his opinions and conclusions;
- b. USPAP Standards 1-2(e) & 2-2(a)(iii) – Respondent failed to evaluate the site adequately and failed to identify and describe the improvements adequately;
- c. USPAP Standards 1-2(e)(iv) & 2-2(a)(viii) – Regarding the Cibolo Property, Respondent failed to identify, consider, and/or describe any known easements, restrictions, encumbrances, leases, reservations, covenants, contracts, declarations, special assessments, ordinances, and/or other items of a similar nature;
- d. USPAP Standards 1-4(b)(i)—(iii) & 2-2(a)(viii); 1-1(a) – Respondent failed to employ recognized methods and techniques in his cost approach and did not provide his supporting rationale for his opinions and conclusions made in the cost approach, and/or determine depreciation;
- e. USPAP Standards 1-4(a) & 2-2(viii); 1-1(a) – Respondent failed to collect, verify, analyze and reconcile comparable sales data and did not employ recognized methods and techniques in the sales comparison approach; and
- f. USPAP Standards 1-1(a), 1-1(b), and 2-1(a) – For the reasons detailed above, Respondent committed several substantial errors resulting in appraisal reports that were misleading and not credible.

6. Respondent made omissions of material fact with respect to the appraisals of the Cristobal and Cibolo Properties as detailed above.

7. In order to reach an expeditious resolution of this matter and avoid the time and expense of litigation, the parties enter into this Agreed Final Order in accordance with TEX. OCC. CODE § 1103.458.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Board has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to the Act.
2. Respondent violated the above-noted provisions of USPAP as prohibited by TEX. OCC. CODE § 1103.405 and 22 TEX. ADMIN. CODE §§ 155.1, 153.20(a)(1), and 153.20(a)(6).

3. The parties are authorized to resolve their dispute by means of a consent order in accordance with TEX. OCC. CODE § 1103.458.

ORDER

Based on the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, the Board **ORDERS**:

1. **MENTORSHIP.** On or before **November 30, 2016**, Respondent shall complete twelve (12) hours of in-person mentorship conducted by a certified USPAP instructor approved by the Board in accordance with the schedule and topics set out below. Respondent shall submit a certification of completion signed by the approved certified USPAP instructor and a signed copy of the Guidelines for Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board Mentors and Mentees on or before the due date listed for each mentorship requirement. Respondent is solely responsible for locating and scheduling an approved mentor to timely satisfy this Agreed Final Order and is urged to do so well in advance of any compliance deadline to ensure adequate time for completion.
 - a. Four (4) hours concerning the cost approach, including developing site value, replacement cost new, and calculating depreciation;
 - b. One (1) hour concerning the identification and support of site improvements;
 - c. Four (4) hours concerning the sales comparison approach and supporting adjustments in the sales comparison approach;
 - d. One (1) hour concerning report writing; and
 - e. Two (2) hours focusing on workfile requirements.
2. Respondent shall fully and timely comply with all of the provisions of this Agreed Final Order; and
3. Respondent shall comply with all provisions of the Act, the Rules of the Board, and USPAP in the future or be subjected to further disciplinary action.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND WAIVER

IF RESPONDENT FAILS TO TIMELY COMPLY WITH ANY TERM IN THIS AGREED FINAL ORDER, WHICH HAS A SPECIFIC, STATED DUE DATE, RESPONDENT SHALL BE ASSESSED A \$1,000 ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY AND RESPONDENT'S LICENSE, CERTIFICATION, AUTHORIZATION OR REGISTRATION SHALL BE SUSPENDED, UNTIL RESPONDENT IS IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THIS ORDER AND THE \$1,000 ADMINISTRATIVE PENALTY HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY THE BOARD.

ANY SUCH SUSPENSION SHALL BE EFFECTIVE WITHOUT THE NEED FOR A HEARING OR OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE DUE PROCESS UNDER THE ACT OR THE APA, AND RESPONDENT SPECIFICALLY WAIVES ANY SUCH HEARING OR DUE PROCESS.

Respondent, by signing this Agreed Final Order, waives the Respondent's right to a formal hearing, any motion for rehearing, and any right to seek judicial review of this Agreed Final Order or to bring any civil suit in state or federal court regarding the validity or enforcement of this Agreed Final Order, regardless of the claims asserted. This Agreed Final Order, the findings of fact and the conclusions of law contained in it have been fully and fairly litigated or the parties had an opportunity to so litigate. This matter has been finally adjudicated and resolved via this Agreed Final Order. This Agreed Final Order shall be treated as res judicata, precluding any re-litigation of those claims and extinguishing the right to bring suit on the matter by the parties or those in privity with them. Information about this Agreed Final Order is subject to public information requests and notice of this Agreed Final Order will be published on the Board's website.

I have read and reviewed this entire Agreed Final Order fully and am entering into it of my own free will to avoid the expense of litigation and to reach an expeditious resolution of the matter. I neither admit nor deny that the findings of fact and conclusions of law contained herein are correct. I understand all of my compliance obligations under this Agreed Final Order and the consequences for failing to comply with those obligations.

I understand that the Board and its staff cannot provide me with legal advice and I am aware of my right to be represented by an attorney of my own choosing. I am aware of my right to a hearing, and hereby waive a hearing and also waive any right to seek judicial review of this Agreed Final Order, including for any subsequent action resulting from my failure to timely comply with an administrative requirement of this Agreed Final Order (e.g. payment of a penalty, completion of remedial education, or failure to provide logs).

DELIVERY OF DOCUMENTS AND PAYMENTS FOR COMPLIANCE

Respondent is solely responsible for timely delivery to the Board of all documents and payments necessary for compliance of this Agreed Final Order. Payment of any administrative penalties due must be in the form of a cashier's check or money order made payable to the "Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board" and delivered via certified mail, return receipt requested. Respondent shall retain documentation (reply email, fax confirmation, return receipt, etc.) confirming timely receipt by the Board of all the documents necessary for compliance of this Agreed Final Order.

Respondent shall send all documents and payments necessary for compliance by: (1) email to: compliance.talcb@talcb.texas.gov; (2) fax to: (512) 936-3966, attn: Compliance; or (3) certified mail, return receipt requested, to: Standards & Enforcement Services, Texas Appraiser Licensing & Certification Board, Stephen F. Austin Building, 1700 N. Congress Ave., Suite 400, Austin, TX 78701.

EXECUTION

This agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, in form of electronic mail, facsimile, or other written expression of agreement, each of which shall be deemed an original and together shall comprise evidence of full execution of the agreement.

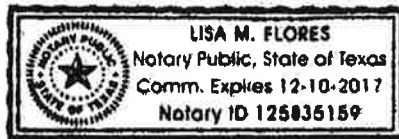
THE DATE OF THIS AGREED FINAL ORDER shall be the date it is executed by the Chairperson of the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board. The Chairperson has been delegated the authority to sign this Agreed Final Order by the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board vote.

RESPONDENT

Signed this 3rd day of August, 2016.


Benjamin Edward Harris

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME, the undersigned, on the 3 day of August, 2016, by Benjamin Edward Harris, to certify which witness my hand and official seal.




Notary Public's Signature

STANDARDS AND ENFORCEMENT SERVICES DIVISION

Signed by the Standards and Enforcement Services Division this 4th day of August, 2016.



Mark R. Lee, Staff Attorney
Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board

COMMISSIONER


Signed by the Commissioner this 4th day of August, 2016.

for 

Douglas Oldmixon, Commissioner
Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board

CHAIRPERSON

Approved by the Board and Signed this 19 day of August, 2016.



Jamie Wickliffe, Chairperson
Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board